LOVE'S PILGRIMAGE

and Other Poems

by

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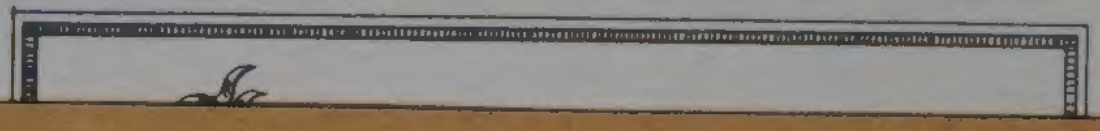

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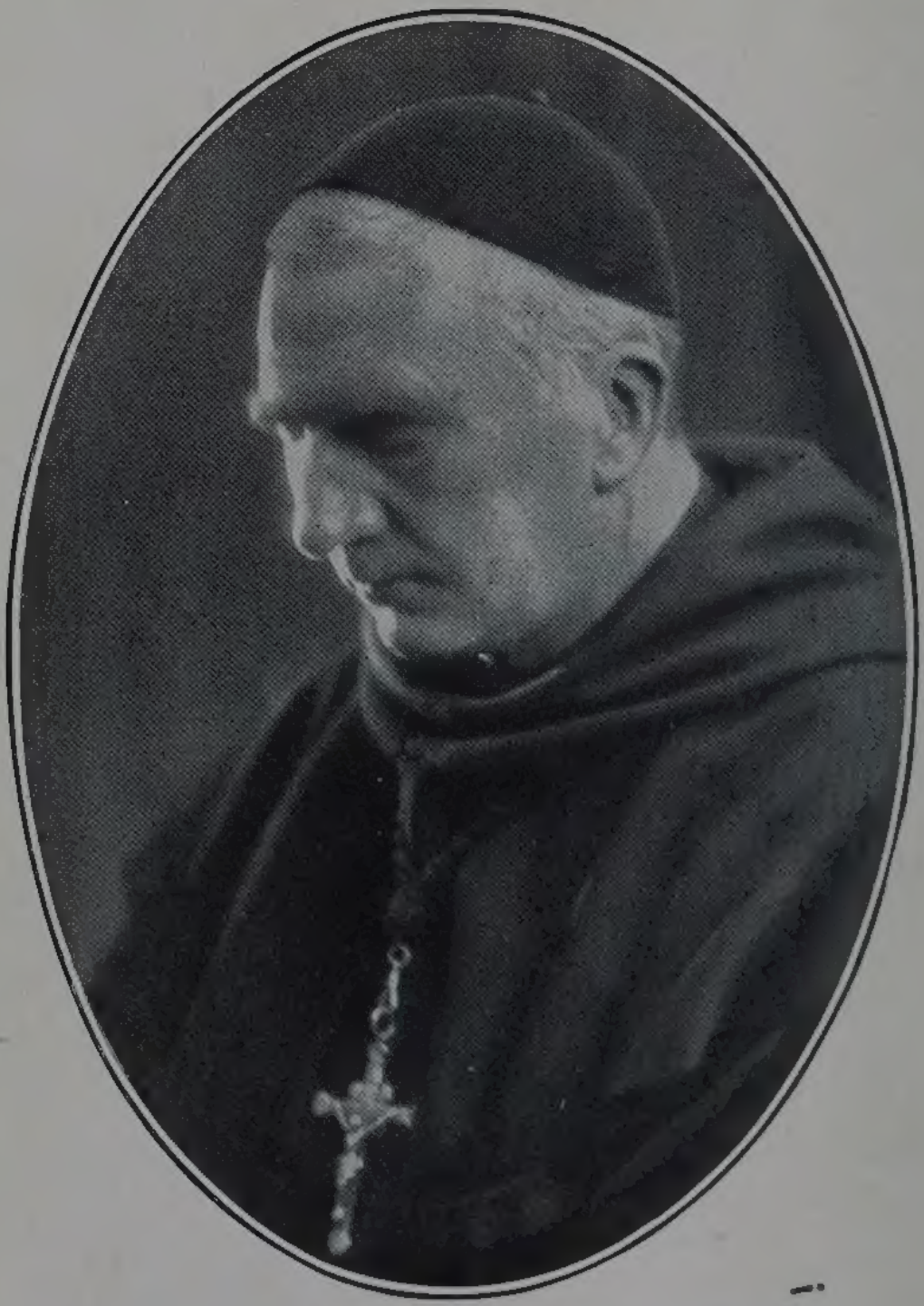

Love's Pilgrimage and Other Poems

BY

FATHER ANDREW, S.D.C.

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To
The Memory
of
My Mother

Foreword

EMBOLDENED by the reception of *Love's Argument* I have dared to hope that the following poems may meet needs and help souls to find beauty amongst life's thorny ways, and to see stars in night-skies. They have all been written for my own soul's need; the thought has always suggested the poem and the poem been the best vesture I could find for the thought. I have grouped them under different titles into collections that can be turned to in diverse moods.

The poem, "Love's Pilgrimage," which gives the book its title, stands by itself, and is the text of the teaching of all the poems. It is the faith by which I live, that the Divine Pilgrim is ever in our midst, though we know Him not; yet when Love passes sometimes we touch His garment's hem, sometimes He touches us. This poem and "The Wise Fool" were written for my mystical play, *Everyburg*, which sets forth dramatically the same idea.

"Prayer Poems" are meditations that have led to prayer.

"Before the Crucifix" gives a title to meditations and moments of musing there.

"Coram Deo" stands for such as were written kneeling in choir before the Blessed Sacrament.

"Meditations" speak for themselves, as do "Carols and Christmas Rhymes."

"A Miscellany" mingles verses that have comforted some mood or shaped some thought to sentences.

"Gold from Galilee" expresses my own homage to the Christ of common life: His real Presence in humanity, Who said, "ye fed Me" and "ye clothed Me" of such as come from the crowd.

I hope "Songs" may be forgiven, for they are simply the singing to himself of a pilgrim who passes by. He cries you "God-speed" and gives you greeting, hoping perhaps his songs may lend you music as you too pass along life's winding road, which seems sometimes so long, so stony, and so steep, but which leads at last, as the poet prophet Isaiah sang, to where the King of beauty waits in the land of far-reaching distances.

I have to acknowledge the courtesy of the editors of the *Church Times* and the *Green Quarterly* for permitting me to reprint poems which have appeared in their pages.

ANDREW, S.D.C.

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LOVE'S PILGRIMAGE AND OTHER POEMS

Love's Pilgrimage

IF Love should come to earth again,
Would He find faith or only pain?
Some stable straw to serve for bed,
A crown of thorns to grace His head?
And must Love pass eternally
From Bethlehem to Calvary?

I would that Love would come to me
And heal my mind and set me free.
A motley fool might yet be wise
To penetrate Love's dear disguise,
If Love pass on eternally
From Bethlehem to Calvary.

Sure Love will come again, again,
And bring men peace and gather pain;
For 'neath the light of moons and morns
Love passes ever crowned with thorns
Eternally, eternally
From Bethlehem to Calvary.

Prayer Poems

In the Presence

HERE in Thy Presence is peace—
Peace would not be
If the silence held nothing,
Were empty of Thee—
My soul's sight of Thee
Is this feeling of peace.

I sit at Thy feet—
And I know with my soul,
More sure and more sweet
Than the joy of my eyes
In the grey and the gold
Of the fairest sun-rise,
It is Thou.

Make me whole
With a wholeness of every part
Of my manifold being :
For God though Thou art
Thou art none the less Man.

Heart, intellect, sex
Were taken by Thee :
This medium of manhood
Could express and not vex
The pure artistry
Of Thy self-disclosure.

God, beheld humanly,
Is of all men most Man :
Yet none the less God
In divine personality.

Prayer Poems

In the Presence

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Peace would not be
If the silence held nothing,
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God, beheld humanly,
Is of all men most Man :
Yet none the less God
In divine personality.

Thou didst fashion my soul,
My body design,
And wedded the twain—
I yield Thee the whole,
Yet I know all is mine
With a freedom complete
When possession is Thine.

I get when I give :
And this I can prove,
I live when I love.

The low doors of my soul
Are all open to Thee :
Thou must stoop very low
To enter to me—
More low than for Dismas
On Mount Calvary.

Prayer

MY God, Thou art everywhere,
And everywhere is there where Thou art near,
And here is everywhere.

And Thou the Father art of every one,
And every one is there where is Thy Son,
And here is every one.

I would reach out in love to Thee—to them,
As Thy life met all life at Bethlehem
So would I reach to them in Thee,
To Thee in them.

Thy Face will I seek

HERE in the silence I would simply ask,
"What wilt Thou, Lord?" and fain would make reply
Whatever Thou shalt answer, "Be it unto me
According to Thy word." And yet I know,
This I have learned, at least, if nothing more,
I cannot, simply, ask of Thee Thy will,
Nor can I, simply, any answer make
Except Thou pour into my soul the grace
To pray for one short moment steadfastly
That I may do Thy pleasure through the next,
And, pitying, grant the prayer Thyself inspired.
So, helpless, Lord, I kneel, and, knowing well
My need of knowing of my need the more,
I fall before Thee and I humbly pray
That Thy vast pity may remember me.
Lord, I have ever sought myself in Thee,
And sought myself again in human loves,
And sought those human loves again in Thee—
And so self looms so large through all my life.
Now may I learn my lesson better, Lord,
Seeking Thee in myself, Thee in all human loves,
Seeking Thee always. Thy face will I seek.

Christmas, 1915

O LOVE that lay on blessed Mary's breast,
Choosing the way of poverty and pain,
Who bade the weary come to Thee and rest—
Thyself the weariest and loneliest—
And didst not ask in vain :

Who reigned all royal from the awful Tree,
Who set Thy face towards Jerusalem,
So, lifted up, to draw all men to Thee
As angels once, by Thy humility,
Were drawn to Bethlehem :

Come to us, Lord, in our Gethsemane—
All watchful now, with eye and ear astrain,
That, schooled by suffering, we perchance may see
The shadow of Thine own great Agony,
Thy Presence in our pain.

So may we find more things than sorrow here,
Even sorrow's angel in the garden's gloom,
And Thou, the Lord of angels, very near,
Coming to us as once Thou cam'st to cheer
The watcher by Thy tomb.

The Mendicant

KIND Lord, give audience to a needy soul,
Fallen on the threshold of Thy sanctuary :
A weary mendicant with raiment foul
And nothing but his need to bring to Thee.

I could not crave of lesser love than Thine
My litany of failure to attend :
I come because I count Thy love divine,
I come because Thou art the sinner's Friend.

Eyes have found rest in sights of loveliness
And ears can have their heaven of harmony,
And heart will throb to heart in tenderness—
But souls are restless, save they rest in Thee.

Ah, Lord, forgive me if I wandered far ;
How was I punished for my faithlessness !
I, who had lost the light of Love's white star,
Bring to Thy piercéd feet my sinfulness.

Sacré Coeur

DEAR Heart, Who in Thy tender love didst come
Not from some cavernous and vasty womb
Of cold and passionless eternity,
But didst in human wise take flesh for me
Of sweet Saint Mary's fair virginity,
And made 'midst men Thy home,

Help me to see the greatest in the least,
The whole of life as one great Eucharist ;
In common ways and simple loyalties
To find hid treasure of high sanctities,
As Love links symbols to realities
In Thy blest altar Feast.

The Two Hills

LIFE'S landscape holds the challenge of two hills :
One we may climb, and one perforce we must.
One is so near to us the very dust
We stand on mingles with its slope
Upwards to God. The other most men trust
Is far beyond the horizon, well would hope
Might not confront their passage. These two hills,
Both of them, shape our souls and forge our wills.

One is the hill of prayer. One cloistered night
Saw the sad Son of Man transfigured there,
And they who climbed with Him and shared His prayer
Tell of great Presences, a Cloud, a Voice,
A very certainty, God's Son seen sure,
Known both to earth and heaven by His choice
Of Cross and thorn and the last place of all.
Then was the Son of Man revealed in prayer
To be the Son of God : so choosing there.

The other is the lonely hill of pain.
And there one noon-tide, though the sun was veiled,
The Son of God, Whose human hands were nailed
By human hands, showed Himself Son of Man ;
And yet that Manhood, pierced and spat upon,
The sport of every cruelty and wrong,
Revealed as very Man the very God
Who the deliberate way of sorrow trod.

Sweet Lord, since I must climb the hill of pain,
Take me apart with Thee that not in vain
I first climb patiently the hill of prayer—
Each is a hill of hope if Thou art there.

Thou knowest whereof we are made

SWEET Jesu, holiest, dearest Lord,
According to Thy blessed word
So be it unto me.
Dear Lord, 'tis easy so to say,
Yet I run counter all the day
To what I pray to Thee.

Sweet Jesu, hid in mystery,
Thy very Self Thou gavest me
This morning in the Mass.
And there I gave myself to Thee
To serve in utter loyalty
Whatever come to pass.

And yet an hour is gone, and I
Am sitting here despondently
As though I lived alone;
As though no heavenly Friend were mine,
As though when tapers ceased to shine
Our intercourse were done.

And yet Thou knowest, knowing all,
In spite of many a fickle fall,
Constant inconstancy,
My poor soul simply clings to Thee,
Nor ever stays its litany,
"Good Lord, deliver me."

Heat

DEAR Lord, it is so hot !
Do Thou forget me not,
For oh, so sleepily
I come to pray to Thee.

I write to keep awake,
And for Thy dearest sake
To keep my soul intent
Where waits Thy Sacrament.

Take Thou this tired kiss,
Nor think it much amiss
If on Thy gentle breast,
Sleeping, I sink to rest.

Before the Crucifix

To the Christ bending down

O HIGH and lifted up, yet leaning down
To those Thou lovest—
Oh, what cruelty
To fashion for Thy head a thorny crown,
And poke Thee up
On that high Tree,
Who camest down
From Thy high heaven
With such courtesy.

And yet, how fair Thou art, my Lord, how fair,
With Thy hands nailéd up above Thee there,
And oh, how sweet Thy face and oh, how dear,
Bending to me
From that high Tree,
In humblest, highest,
Truest royalty.

Agnus Dei

"ETERNAL life"—what would that mean to me?
Living for ever, existing endlessly;
I ask not that—save Love should be fulfilled in me.

"The songs of heaven," "white robes," "the crystal sea,"
"Peace," serene, removed from even memories of misery;
I ask not that—if there must still be misery.

I pray that I may see the Face of Love;
That I may climb that Calvary above
And share God's travail that the Cross did prove.

I am content with Love in any sphere;
Nor would I count that heaven anywhere,
Or life—save Love Himself were reigning there.

Lowly I kneel before the Crucified;
Surely I see, all live because He died—
Truly I know that heaven is by His side.

Love's Baptism

CERTAIN the sentence. Love indeed must die;
As soon as Love is born Love's fate is sealed.
That Love was straitened, Love Himself revealed
Till He had climbed the cliff of Calvary.

Wet with the dews of death the sacred brow,
Fulfilling righteousness, as once before
Where the wild rushes waved on Jordan's shore
Willed to a creature's baptism to bow.

Love were not love if Love were loth to die;
Life is Love's child, and Death the solemn priest
Dew-sprinkling life, by baptism released
From the first fetters of his destiny.

Love at His altar takes the sacred bread,
And first He blesses, then He breaks in twain,
Then shares the quickened symbols of His pain;
So of His Sacrifice His sons are fed.

And every one who is a child of Love
Must be himself both priest and victim too;
Must know his own life broken through and through,
And joy by sacrifice his love to prove.

A Colloquy

HERE am I at Thy feet once again,
Dear God,
My net drawn to shore
With its bad and its good,
The yield of the flood
Of the fast flowing sea
That ebbs to the sunset
And leaves me with Thee.

At Thy feet—
Such a tangle of weed in my meshes,
At Thy feet, so dear,
So fair in the sand gold,
With rose-royal wounds
More red than the sunset,
More white than the foam,
By the watery bounds
Of the sun-seeking sea
Of time and eternity.

Thou wilt not say *all*
Must be thrown back again
To this fast ebbing sea?
Not *all* that my pain
Hath gathered for Thee?
It may be some pearl
Shall lie at Thy feet
As we sit down to eat—
Thy treasure for me,
My treasure for Thee,
Master—see!

The Message

"SEEK"—Thou hast said.
"Seek"—say Thy priests,
"Seek, seek, thou shalt find
He will come to thine aid,
For the Saviour is kind
And to spiritual feasts
He will welcome thy soul."

Every year such an one
Gives this message to me,
E'er the first day is done
He has brought this from Thee
So he says—I must seek.
"Thy retreat must be seeking
The Saviour of men—
Shalt find, never doubt it."
Again and again,
"Seek on, ever seek."

And yet in my soul,
In the deepest of me,
Quite certain and sure
And more tenderly
Than the whisper of winds
Or still sigh of the sea,
Without choice to choose,
Low but insistently,
Thy voice bids me *lose*—
This Thy message to me,
"See *thou* to the losing,
Trust seeking to Me."

Coram Deo

The Communion of Penitents

I COME to Thee in penitence, my King,
Holding the hand of Mary Magdalene.
I lived my life, I dreamed my dream ;
Just my life, I living it,
I getting, not giving it ;
Just my dream, I dreaming it,
Effecting nought, just seeming it ;
But now, the inrush of reality
Of Thy blest Presence that has come to me
Brings me the vision that blots out the dream,
Replaces with the Real the things that seem,
And, like Thy friends of old in Galilee,
Fain would I leave my schemes and follow Thee.

If I can follow where Thy feet have trod,
And preach the Gospel of the grace of God ;
And see Thy sheep coming to Thee,
Just to Thee, I bringing them,
Thy praises, we singing them,
Thy mercy, I ministering it,
Thy love, we whispering it ;
Then shall I walk with Thee in great content,
Embrace Thee daily in Thy Sacrament,
And be as those who followed in Thy train
In days triumphant over sin and pain ;
But, O my Master, grant great grace to me
When the road dips towards Gethsemane.

I come to Thee in penitence, my King,
Holding the hand of Mary Magdalene ;
She knew three nights so drear and dark :
Her body's night, she fleeing it,

Her mind's night, Thou dispersing it,
Her soul's night, Thou enflooding it,
Her soul's peace, Thou indwelling it.
So we are knit to one in sympathy,
And she hath taught me very tenderly
Of how with rain of tears she kissed Thy feet,
Of how she companied Thy Mother sweet
To Calvary, how to Thy grave she came
And how Thy lips made music of her name.

In Praise of Silence

DEAR Hand that shut me in,
I kiss Thee—
Nor would I
Draw back Thy bolt of silence,
Lest perchance
I miss Thee
In some revealing of Thy hidden love.

True I have met Thee
In the teeming town,
And dull, drab streets have glinted gold again
For Thy dear Presence passing—
And the way of pain
Has been the way of glory manifest
In the sweet patience of the much opprest.

But Thy best secrets, Lord,
Have ever been
In silent places whispered to my soul—
As going to Thine altar through the dawn,
Over the green
Of misty meadows in the dewy morn,
Or in the long night watches,
Sleepless, where
I found Thee better than Thy gift of sleep.

So I would greet Thee,
Loyal in my pain,
And welcome Thee
In silence come to reign ;
In silence come
Thy royal tryst to keep.

Attraction

HOW kind Thou art, my Lord,
How kind to me,
Who ever callest me to come to Thee.
Sometimes so wearily,
Doubtingly, rebelliously,
I hear Thee say, "Come unto Me."
Oh, such a sour soul is mine,
Oh, such a patient sweetness Thine
To bear so long with me.

Thy kindness calleth me—
To whom else should I go?
To the moon's magic flow
All the wide waters of the whispering sea,
In rhythmic tides obediently they go
By that moon-music drawn surrenderingly.
And my soul hath its Sun,
And I shall crawl or run,
But come I must since Thou art calling me.

Haven

BACK to the silence of Thy heart
My soul comes home ;
Bringing to Thee the smirching and the smart,
Needy I come ;
Yet there is 'neath it all a deep content,
For I have found my pain a sacrament ;
Calmly I come.

Back to the silence of Thy peace
My soul I bring ;
Like some poor snaréd bird that found release,
With wounded wing,
So do I flutter to my proper nest,
Weary and spent but utterly at rest,
Love sheltering.

Back to the silence of Thy love
From sounds that lie ;
Here in my loneliness to prove
So utterly,
Alone with Thee that I am not alone,
That what Thou doest ever is well done—
Dear certainty !

Heaven

'TWAS not the royalty of light,
Playing caressingly about Thy brow,
That made that dawn the end of every night
For her who knelt, who kneels before Thee now :
The low tones of Thy gentle human voice,
Thrilling with tenderness to speak her name,
Made, and still make, the soul of her rejoice ;
Thou, her one heaven, art evermore the same.

'Twas not alone Thy rising from the dead—
For Lazarus rose—'twas something more than power
That taught them in the breaking of the bread
At Emmaus, that mystic evening hour ;
That made the chill, wet fishermen to know,
After a weary night of tossing toil,
How, as resistless as the tide's strong flow,
Love at the last shall every fetter foil.

'Tis not the rainbow round the golden throne,
Nor all the angels with their harps of gold,
That shall make heaven. Souls might still be lone
'Mid all such glories, human hearts be cold.
Love makes of home a heaven, and heaven the same
Love makes a home. Yea, all God's children there
Have heard His voice Who calls His sheep by name—
They just have Jesus, Who made heaven here.

Meditations

The Sweet, Dark Night

O LOVE unfathomable,
Into Thy deep depths I plunge my soul,
Losing all sight, all consciousness—
And yet unconscious, conscious
That the Dark surrounding,
Holding and enfolding me,
Impenetrating every part of me,
Is Love's essential Presence
Blessing me.

O sweetest darkness,
Sweetest loneliness,
Darkness, because no form can image Thee,
Loneliness, because I am within
Thy love, and no apparent sense
Can give my senses consciousness
Of that which is beyond
The senses' ignorance.

Great Lord and Lover, lo, I yield my soul
To the sweet tyranny
Of Thine o'ermastering grace,
So to be borne, self-yielding, by Thy will
The happy captive
Of Thy conquering love.

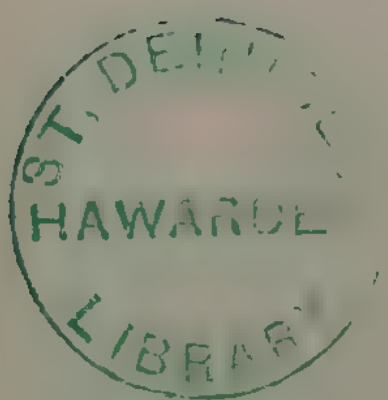
Love's Tide

O Life behind our life,
Eternal Love,
In Whose tranquillity abides
The rhythmic music of three mystic tides
That make Thee One.

Let the far-flowing
Of Thy love's wide sea,
Flooding time's shallows,
Even reach to me,
Here on the finite shore
Of Thine infinity.

Oft have I watched the tide,
Rose-tinged at dawn,
With sure possession
Surely claim the shore,
Smooth the scarred sands
With shining waters, hide
And blot man's marrings out
For evermore.

Cover and cleanse my soul,
Lord Jesu Christ,
With the calm tide
Of Thy blest Eucharist.



That Holy Thing

O LOVE, Love, Love !
Thou wonderful white Thing !
Born of the blessed Mary's hallowing,
Of human babes the very Humanest,
Yet heaven's most high King.

O Love, Love, Love !
Thou wonderful white Thing !
Dear Body, dimly wan in death's shrouding,
From meekest manger to unkindest Cross
Thou hast passed triumphing.

O Love, Love, Love !
Thou wonderful white Thing !
On holy altar at the priest's sacring
Present in pleading, pure and pitying ;
Thou only holy, perfect Offering.
O Love, Love, Love !
Thou wonderful white Thing !

Deus, Deus, Meus

A Meditation on Psalm xxii

MY God, my God !
Who in my mother's travail
Willed of her pain through Thy creative power
That life should come to being in that hour,
That life in resurrection should prevail ;
My God, Who took me from my mother's womb,
Who wast my hope when nourished at her breast,
I, a pale pilgrim travelling to a tomb,
Turn to that same creative Love for rest.

My God, my God !
My mother lent Thee pain—
That I might live went gladly down towards death,
Near drew her last that I my earliest breath
Might catch with crying when I came to be ;
And now by death's adventure she has passed
To where, beyond our dreamings, she may see
All travail truth interpreted at last.

My God, my God !
I cry to Thee for light ;
Teach me to trust these are not throes of death
But travail pangs, and the true price of birth
These toils of pilgrimage that all must meet,
That of our pain a people shall be born—
The night of Calvary's divine defeat
Gave to Thy world a Resurrection morn.

My God, my God !
Be Thou not far from me :
Give to blind eyes the vision of the pure :
I ask for more than courage to endure,

More than to fetter flesh or fight a fiend ;
Living I want to know Life hath not lied,
Journeying, I would glimpse my journey's end,
Hungering, feed on Thee and so be satisfied.

Love's Paradox

A Meditation on the Sacred Passion
(1 *Cor.* i. 25.)

O LOVE, omnipotent to make
The darkest hour surest victory,
Yet not omnipotent to break
The clumsy weapons forged by cruelty.

Lo, what a paradox is perfect Love!
Thy power weakness and Thy weakness strength:
Thy folly wisdom, and the endless length
Of Thy long patience "folly."

Bent bramble for Thy crown,
A gallows Cross Thy throne:
Thy stupid subjects mock and spit at Thee—
Wilt Thou reign over pitiable me
Daily denying and betraying Thee?

Thou art sewed up in robes of mockery,
Tricked out in such fool's finery
As man's brute brainlessness can find for Thee;
Blindfolded, silent, with Thy sceptre reed,
A King of rags and tatters; who would heed
Such proven, ineffectual impotence?

Yet Thou shalt reign for ever King of Love.
Love is both blind and foolish, all-seeing and all-wise,
Slain, yet immortal; and all royalties
Must spread their robes before those feet so fair,
Pierced in ascending sorrow's sacred stair.

All crowns are lowered 'neath His twist of thorn,
All days are dark till glows the golden morn
Of Christ's acknowledged reign. For Love is King,
Serene, secure beyond all rivalling.

Carols and Christmas Rhymes

A Carol of the Three Kings

JINGLE, jangle, star and spangle,
Over the wilderness wide,
Tall camels sway in the wilderness way
With their spacious, spongy stride.
And three grave kings with mystic things,
In search of the King Who is King of kings,
Three steadfast spectres ride.

Stars are shining, silver lining
Leaves of the palm trees grey—
If God should call, forsaking all,
Man must take the wilderness way ;
And these must ride, nor ever abide,
On a road so long, through a world so wide,
To a Babe on a bed of hay.

" Dearie, Dearie," blessed Mary
Croons to her little Son.
And the three grave kings with their mystic things
Kneel low to Him, one by one ;
And glad they are, though they came from far,
That they followed the light of the guiding Star
That led to Mary's Son.

Hide and Seek

HIDE and seek, hide and seek,
Seek, seek, children, seek,
Jesus is hidden away :
He 's hidden somewhere in Bethlehem,
But no one knows where in Jerusalem.
Look, look in every nook,
Ask that old scribe who is reading his book,
Ask that old shepherd who leans on his crook,
Search in the stable hay.

Hide and seek, peep, peep ;
Little white lamb and old mother sheep,
Have you seen Jesus, say ?
He 's hidden somewhere in Bethlehem,
But they can't tell where in Jerusalem.
Where can He be ? He 's ever so wee—
They say He is born in David's town,
And we have come trooping over the down ;
Have angels been this way ?

Hide and seek, peer and poke ;
He might be under S. Joseph's cloke
Or Mary's robe of blue.
Could we see angels or could we find them,
We'd know we were near Him in Bethlehem,
Where can He be ? He 's ever so wee—
O look, look, look, come this way ;
There, in a nook in a nest in the hay
I can see Him—can you ?

The Loveliest Love

HAD I been minding lambs those days
When angels came, in angel ways,
And called the shepherd lads with them
To hide-and-seek at Bethlehem,
To seek for Jesus up and down,
And find the King without His crown—
I think I would have tried to prove
Which was the Babe brought from above
By looking for the loveliest Love.
And when, half hidden 'neath the straw,
Mary's wee Babe at last I saw,
I would have guessed that Love alone
Would choose a manger for His throne.
And angels, wonderful and white,
Would all have cried,
"You've guessed quite right."

A Carol

THE stars are singing a silver song,
Melody, sweet Melody;
The bells are ringing dong-a ding-dong,
Good sooth, a Benedicite!
'Tis early, early, Christmas Morn
What time our darling Lord was born,
Then let all scorn be put to scorn
For Charity, Saint Charity.

The altar lights glow gold and dim,
Mystery, sweet Mystery;
Come, brothers all, and welcome Him
With wedding-white for purity!
Love lit the flame wise souls that led
To Bethlehem, the House of Bread,
God's children by God's Child are fed—
Gramercy, Lord, Gramercy!

Myrrh

KINGS should offer gold, rich, royal men—
And I am poor and no red gold have I ;
Must I stay in the cold, sad shadows then,
While kings in light spread splendours splendidly ?

Saints should offer incense, holy men—
My shabby soul is soiled and stained with sin ;
Must I wait, shut without the stable then,
While saints join kings to offer gifts within ?

Lo, I am not alone, but round me here
In the wan shadows, waiting wistfully
With nothing else to bring but only myrrh,
Stands silent, shy, a grey-clad company.

'Tis well for us, we of the common crowd,
That we may bring sad symbollings of myrrh,
Where God lies sleeping 'neath a stable shroud
Of common straw, and leave our offerings there.

We will be glad the incense makes a veil
To hide us somewhat, and the saint's pure prayer
Goes with the golden gifts where we must fail ;
Yet we will dare to bring our meed of myrrh.

The Secret

WHAT is the secret of the stars
That drift, drift
Over the mystic sea of the purple night?
Will it ever lift
This mystery? Will Light bring light?
For they keep their secrets these silent stars,
And the songs of Venus, the shouts of Mars,
Who hath heard?
Yet once there were simple men who say
That the night was turned to radiant day,
And a word
Was spoken, a tale was told—
"The Lamb of God is laid in the fold
Of this earth"—
So the angels sang, and the shepherds ran
To the manger, and Love and Light began
With Jesu's birth.
And I wot that winsome tale is true,
And wise were those shepherds, and well they knew
The Lamb of God.
And that is the secret of earth and heaven
That "Unto us a Son is given,"
The Son of God.

The Dayspring

THE dawn drives off the dark, and day doth come
Queening away the fearsomeness of night ;
But all the world is blessed Mary's home,
Nor any hour can lack for her its night
While He, our souls' one Sun, lies 'neath her gaze ;
And He, our hearts' one Home, curled cosily,
Can even straw and stall and stable raise
To throne and palace by His royalty ;
For perfect Love hath come Who casts out fear—
Now doth the Dayspring from on high appear.

Bethlehem

HUMBLE and human and born of a maiden,
Straw of Thy crib a gold vesture for God,
Children may gaze on Thee, wide-eyed and wondering,
Angels may kiss where Thy Mother hath trod.

Oh, Pearl of Paradise, Mary's beloved One,
Stars were created to lead us to Thee;
Love hath its crowning and sorrow its meaning,
All life its interpreting, Saviour, in Thee.

Feed us Thy hungering ones, lighten our loneliness,
Bread for our being be, strength for our pain;
On Thy babe bosom lies all this world's weariness,
And, if it lead to Thee, all this world's gain.

Lovelight

ONCE down some steep old Syrian stair,
A dim, sweet vision in the night,
Stepped Mary with her Blossom fair,
While God's soft stars gave candle-light.

And oh, how steep life's stairs may be,
And oh, how dark may be the night;
Yet since Love came for you and me
Even thorns have blossomed wondrously,
And through all dark with certainty
Love leads to Light.

The Queen's Hand

KIND Queen of Heaven, lend thy little hand,
And I will press upon it such a kiss
Of homage, reverence, and loyalness
As only heaven's courtiers understand.

I kiss thy priestly hand, so strong, so fair,
Handling so oft the Body of the Christ.
He hides Himself from me in Eucharist,
He lay upon thy lap and stroked thy hair.

I kiss the hand that bathed His baby limbs,
I kiss the hand that smoothed His nest of straw
While angels, kneeling round, the wonder saw,
Yielding the haunting homage of their hymns.

I kiss the hand that sewed and swept and baked,
Busied in childhood His dear lips to feed,
That waited all His life upon His need,
Whose touch lent comfort to a Heart that ached.

I kiss the hand that in His latest rest
Tended His Body underneath the Cross ;
Our gain was purchased by that awful loss,
I kiss thy hand, of Queens, the royalest.

Problems at the Manger

O MIGHTY God, O baby King,
Thyself must teach what welcoming
Thy children, old and young, should bring,
How each should make his offering.

For here are little boys and girls,
With tidy clothes and ordered curls ;
A little Scout his flag unfurls,
His mother kneels in lace and pearls.

And here are faces pinched and white,
And men who walked about all night ;
A soldier who has lost his sight,
A boy whose sums will not come right.

The young, the middle-aged, the old
Are gathered here, some gay with gold,
Some ragged creatures, starved and cold—
The fat and lean are in Thy fold.

And though our hearts at Christmas glow
With sense of shame that things are so,
Yet how to get the world to go
In Christian ways we do not know.

There 's nothing wrong in tidy boys,
It's nice to give expensive toys,
It's natural to make a noise,
And lovely things are perfect joys—

Yet still we kneel before Thy straw
In penitence and puzzled awe—
Show us our system's vital flaw,
And that strong truth the Wise Men saw.

Love, Thou must teach us, every one,
To toil until Thy will be done;
So never in this world again
Shall child be housed in cattle pen.

A Miscellany

The Kiss

I WENT into the enchanted garden,
Where silver pools of light were spilt
By the moon, and there I knelt
Submissively, lest my heart should harden.

For life had altogether failed me,
I had failed life I know, yes, all had failed,
Faith, hope, and love were dead and nailed
To a drear stake like lies, and doubt assailed me.

How callous seemed the silver night—
Beauty that ends in ashes, hope that 's dead,
And faith and love defeated, and instead
A reign of doubt, despair, and senseless might.

Is what our pride has fondly christened life
A mad machine to make men out of dust ?
Men who inevitably must
Make dust again for this machine of life ?

Has life been stumbled on by some blind power ?
And are we accidents, we passionate men
Who dream that we shall build Jerusalem,
Who think in ages and live but an hour ?

Then One came to me slowly through the trees
Out of the soul of all sweet silences ;
His Presence, Who alone gives presences
Their meaning, came, and I rose from my knees.

" Hail, Master," cried I, and He gave to me
The right to kiss Him, bending royally.
I pray I touched His flesh all loyally,
I pray my kiss were not a treachery.

Driven by the Spirit

"NEEDS must," they say, "when the devil drives";
And they count theirs wholly reckless lives
Who go the way that the devil leads,
Who feed on what the devil feeds,
Who dance to the tune that the devil plays
And conform themselves to all his ways.

But since I thrilled to Jesu's Name
I count the devil very tame;
And much more reckless is the way,
If you would "Follow my Leader" play
With that great Gambler Who could toss
His life away to climb a Cross.

Whose lips have kissed the chalice full
Of Jesu's Blood, will count it dull
To drink the devil's heady wine;
And think it vulgar to entwine
Their brows with flowers by him down torn
Who have felt the stab of Jesu's thorn.

Dear and great Master, well I knew
Just where the devil was going to:
And that dull driver would be vext
If one didn't sin the next sin next;
But following Thee—I never know
On what adventure next we go.

Friendship

MY friend, beware of me
Lest I should do
The very thing I'd sooner die than do,
In some way crucify the Christ in you.

If you are called to some great sacrifice,
And I should come to you with frightened eyes
And cry, " Take care, take care, be wise, be wise ! "
See through my softness then a fiend's attack,
And bid me get me straight behind your back ;
To your own conscience and your God be true
Lest I play Satan to the Christ in you.

And I would humbly ask of you in turn
That if some day in me Love's fires should burn
To whiteness, and a Voice should call
Bidding me leave my little for God's all,
If need be, you would thrust me from your side—
So keep love loyal to the Crucified.

The Garden

IN the beginning of the days,
'Twas in a garden that God's voice was heard ;
In flower flames men saw His beauty blaze,
And when the breath of evening softly stirred
The leaves, then was His Presence found,
And man knew earth's green garden holy ground.

'Twas in a garden Jesus loved to pray,
And in the hour of His greatest need
To that same garden glade He went His way ;
There would He find the Father, there would plead
That if 'twere possible the cup might pass—
Sacred with sweat of Blood that garden grass.

'Twas in a garden the Lord's Body lay
Held in its rocky shrine, with lilies nigh.
Great Death was comforted that Sabbath day,
Whose high vocation served Christ loyally :
For Death proclaimed Him everlasting King,
The earliest courtier of His triumphing.

'Twas to a garden sad love came alone
Leaving both faith and hope behind that morn,
Expecting but a barrier of stone
In that dark hour before the day is born
Lo, every flower flings scents, all birds do sing
The Resurrection of the Garden's King.

The Mother of Judas

AH, once she only lived to nurse his need,
Her darling one, her little son, her Judas;
She would awake at night to kiss him and to feed
The strong, warm lips that claimed her motherhood,
Laugh in the dark, or e'er the day began,
To think she was the mother of a man—
Whose wealth of woe should be the price of blood!

Yea, for her son hath sold another's Son,
Mary's sweet Son, the blessed One, Christ Jesus,
And that is done which cannot be undone.
Through all the years and days as long as years
Her soul shall by all woes be tenanted,
Her quivering heart be piercéd by all spears.

That Sabbath when Christ rested in the Tomb
They tell us not where fared His Mother then.
Did her pure sorrow shine in other's gloom
And find the mother of Iscariot?
And were that saddest twain that ever were
Held by God's sorrow in a common lot?

Dear God, Who knowest all, her destiny,
Who Judas bare—and his—are safe with Thee.
Our minds may question, but our hearts know well
The Heart that made our hearts is not less kind
Than our best dreams of mercy, we can tell
Our heart's sure answer to our questing mind—
"Love is both King and Judge, and all is well."

Haunted

I PASSED the haunted house upon the hill,
It stood there black and grim against the sky;
The grey sea sobbed, the wind shrieked shrill—
I made the holy sign and hurried by.

And down I dropped into the little town,
There where the burn comes tumbling to the sea;
And in the grey old church I knelt me down—
The place was still, the lamp shone rosily.

How many sorts of haunting can there be?
Thought I. This shrine is haunted by the Christ;
The dear, decked altar thrones His Majesty
Who comes in Eucharist.

The ancient house is haunted by a fear,
And many a heart has sorrow for a guest;
Anger and doubt make evil atmosphere,
'Tis Love alone gives rest.

I dipped me in Bethesda's pool of prayer;
I left the church a new, peace-haunted soul,
For I had met the Love that casts out fear,
The Lord Who maketh whole.

I passed the haunted house upon the hill;
Its peaceful, lichened porch suggested prayer;
It lent me sanctuary calm and still,
And I said Compline there.

The Touch

ONE touched me and I felt defiled—
And was I "righteous overmuch"
That just a brushing hand's light touch
Should leave me with a sense of smirch
As though my very soul were soiled?

One touched me with a touch so cold—
I could believe the lusty press
Of some rough lover's crude caress
Were less allied with sinfulness
Than was that touch so cruelly cold.

One touched me and yet touched me not—
It might have been a hand of wood,
Nor hot nor cold, nor bad nor good;
No soul behind the flesh and blood
Of that dumb touch that touched me not.

One touched me, all my being thrilled—
A touch all pure, all passionate,
A touch that in its power held
All peace, all love inviolate;
Only a touch, my being thrilled,
Only a touch—and I was healed.

Leiston Abbey

SET in the silence of surrounding green,
Tipped here and there with radiant flames of gold
Where shines in crannied nooks the wallflowers' sheen,
Ruined and royal, reverend, grey, and old
They stand, these Abbey walls—what secrets do they hold?

The sunset paints them; the mysterious night
Shows through the roofless nave solemnities
Of twinkling stars, each like an altar light
Shining about the moon that seems to rise
Blessing, like monstranced Host, with silent sanctities.

Where once the white-robed brethren brushed the wall,
The silver foam of the wild parsley spreads;
Where paced the stately abbot to his stall,
Or waved a blessing over tonsured heads,
On daisied green some modern mortal treads.

A brown owl, hunting, sails on silent wings
Out through the empty chancel window there;
And in the ruined choir sweetly sings
A nightingale, where once the patient prayer
Of some pale, watching monk ascended here.

Christ, Whose true temple is not made with hands,
Guide questing feet, that find this place of prayer,
To that Jerusalem which for ever stands,
That all may kneel before Thy Presence there
Who, praying, sought Thee in the shadows here.

Post Communion

GLAD in the glory of Thy revelation,
Strong in the strength of Thy mysterious Food,
One in the offering of Thy pure Oblation,
Give we ourselves, our body and our blood.

Give we to Thee an offering unblaméd,
Life where each moment is an act of praise ;
Give we to men, as workmen unashaméd,
Service that shall Thy Commonwealth upraise.

Keep we the vision in its undimmed splendour,
Live we as brothers in our Father's Home ;
As Thou hast loved us, loyal, strong, and tender,
Love we and work we till Thy kingdom come.

So shall Thy travail have its perfect ending,
So shall the golden sheaves be gathered in,
While to earth's ends Thy clarion is sending
Heralds of hope and rescuers from sin.

Till at the last, as Love transfigures duty,
There, where the vision of Thy saints is sure,
We shall behold Thee, King in all Thy beauty,
Whose hearts have won the blessing of the pure.

The Romance of the Soul

SWEET Lord, Who willed that the delicious dawn
Should be the time when heavenly Manna fell,
Then, when the dew shines silver on the lawn,
I yield me wholly to the sacred spell
That draws me—softly tread the stair,
Lift light the latch and meet the morning air,
Bidden by beckoning of a Bridal bell.

Her morning melodies my soul shall sing ;
My soul, for ever young, for ever fair,
Dancing o'er daisied downs to meet her King,
Blithe as a bride with blossoms in her hair,
Wayward and wild but won, His beggar maid,
Speeding to Him, afraid yet not afraid,
Caught to His heart, there at His altar stair.

No human love, my Lord, but only Thine
Could find beneath my rough apparelling
One littlest grace, one beauty that is mine,
To win one mite of human meriting ;
Thy majesty is as Thy purity,
Yet Thou dost throw about my poverty
Wrought gold as for the daughter of a King.

'Tis pretty well as bare as Bethlehem,
This little, common church to which I speed,
No hint of heavenly Jerusalem
That complicated mortal mind might heed ;
Bare church, bruised body, yet my soul can dance
And yield herself to Love's divine romance,
And hear a low-voiced Lover softly plead.

Sunshine

THE white road winding beckoned me
With hint of finding, just beyond
The turning by the wayside pond,
Something, someone, that wanted me.

And when I passed the willow pool
I met a mother with her child ;
I looked, the baby laughed and smiled,
And out the children came from school.

And as I wandered on alone
Along the friendly, winding road,
My heart, I think, was Christ's abode ;
Alone I was, yet not alone.

Gold from Galilee

Gold from Galilee

I SAW a mother with her child,
So fair a sight it was to see :
Heart held to heart so cosily,
Head bent to head so prettily,
Cheek laid on breast so sacredly ;
Such confidence, such unity.

I saw a man's face tender grow,
A hard, strong face touched mellowly ;
A smile may, as a mirror, show
The quality of company—
" Upon the mountain paths how sweet
The coming of God's messenger "—
And, none the less, in common street
When working wife and husband greet,
Love still tells tidings that are sweet,
And you may know God's goodness there.

I saw a little, ragged boy
Who stumbled steadfastly along,
A thing of tiredness and joy,
His limbs an ache, his heart a song.
The dead weight of a sleeping babe
Tried all his little manhood's might ;
He bore his burden bravely on
And something sacred round him shone
More rich than robes that throng a throne,
I hailed him God's true knight.

And as I looked and as I thought,
I knew how fair His face must be
Whose love all blessedness hath brought,
Whose Spirit all true love hath taught,

Whose precious Blood hath healing wrought,
Whose love true love hath ever sought ;
Who in the mother and the child,
In working man and working wife,
In boy and babe, all lovely life,
In tenderness hath ever smiled,
The Lord, the Christ of Galilee.

Pilgrims

EACH morning as I go to Mass,
At the same place in the dreary street,
The same folk I am sure to pass,
Plodding along with patient feet.

Sometimes, perhaps, I go away,
But sure when I come back to town,
The same folk I shall meet next day,
The same black coat, the same drab gown.

And on and on through all the year
This human tide will ebb and flow,
Silent and patient, drab and drear,
To the same weary work they go.

And you and I have clothes to wear,
And things for lunch and jam for tea,
Because these folk, who sometimes swear,
Endure their long monotony.

Your doctor says, "Avoid the heat,"
And off you fly to beach or down,
But still the workers' weary feet
Make pilgrimage in London Town.

And often when I kneel to pray
By light of London's moons and morns,
They pass before me, drab and grey
But beautiful, and crowned with thorns.

The Girl in the Garret

FROM this poor attic window
One can see silver stars,
Peaceful and still above the noise
And traffic of the street ;
And after the monotony,
The weariness, the jars
That make my life,
Their company is sweet.

After working like a cheap machine
In the factory all day,
Making millions of fractions
Of things I've never seen,
I climb up here beneath the roof
And sort of try to pray,
And dream of flowers—and angels—
And gardens that are green.

My boy was lost, somewhere at sea,
The one bit of love I had ;
It made life worth while living
With Bill waiting down the street,
And the tune he whistled out of tune
Made all the evenings glad—
But now—
There 's no one much I want to meet.

I wonder what 's beyond the stars ?
And what it's like to die ?
It's a pretty common custom in the town !
Mum and Dad went west
When we was keeping company—
Then poor old Bill must go away and drown.

Death came to him quite sudden,
It might come to me, quite soon,
And then—what?
God—Jesus—Mary—angels—
And, I hope,
My Bill, whistling out of tune.

A Diamond in a Dust-heap

THERE 'S Bill out of work,
And Father chasing the dole,
And Fanny fooling about and learning to shirk,
And poor old Mum in a hole ;
And there 's me and our Mag and 'Arry and Bert,
And Alf can't sleep 'cos 'e 's on to a cert,
And Liz joined the " Army " and saving 'er soul.

Two summers ago
Bill whispered to me, kind o' 'oarse,
" If I should touch lucky, it might be, you know,
In August—first Monday, o' course."
And I thought o' the costoom I'd wear,
'Ow I'd make poor old Mum look quite smart,
And give our old Dad something extry for beer.
And then if my Bill didn't come over queer,
And carn't work now—they say it's 'is 'eart.

For two blessed years
Bill 's bin bad, and it gets on 'is mind.
I looks at 'im quiet sometimes—I know wot 'e fears,
Thinks I'm fair wasting myself—'e 's kind,
My ol' Bill. Life for 'im ain't no joke.
Well, wotever may 'appen I'm bound to be true to my bloke.
You must jus' take the rough and the smooth as you find.

There 's people scoot by
In great cars past the end of our street ;
I watches and pictures just where they will fly.
To take my ol' Bill to the sea wouldn't 'arf be a treat ;

'E 'asn't slep' once out o' London so fur as I know,
'E might pick up a bit with good air and good food.
Life would be that awful lonely if Bill 'ad to go—
I'm thinking the love of my pal is my 'eart's very blood.
Well, our priest says at church Christ give His fur our food ;
There 's things about Christ I believe I'm beginning to *know*.

Songs

Fleeting Songs

I WONDER where they come from,
Those songs that seem to fly
Swift past my soul,
Escaping memory?

Like sudden shafts of sunshine
That light up all the world,
Then leave it dark
With all its banners furled;

Like moments of moon magic,
Gone even as soon as seen,
So fleet they fly,
But hinting they have been.

My mind halts hard behind them,
My soul scarce sees their wing;
Hope tells me I shall find them
In heaven echoing.

Rags and Tatters

RAGS and Tatters,
What care I?
Wand'ring alone, alone,
Nothing matters
To Rags and Tatters,
Mine the sea and the sun.
Mine are the stars
And the wind on the heath,
And the dim dawn gold
And the surf's salt breath.
Rich am I as rich can be,
As rich as a queen, and much more free.
Though the world chatters
Of Rags and Tatters,
There 's nothing that matters
To me, to me,
There 's nothing that matters
To me.

Love's Fulfilment

THEN is love fulfilled in me
When my babe shall come;
When he lies upon my knee
Then shall home be home;
Little one, darling one,
Bonniest bairn beneath the sun.

God's most sacred trust to me
Dropped from heaven above;
Pure and precious, white and wee,
Love's own gift of love;
Little one, darling one,
Bonniest bairn beneath the sun.

The Wise Fool

THERE was a king who lost his crown,
Poor king, poor king,
Because the people of the town
To whom that king came humbly down,
Knew him not without his gown
For a king, poor king.

But one poor fool the king could see,
Poor fool, wise fool,
Because the king had skill to see
A brother 'neath the torn motley.
'Neath rags the fool saw royalty:
No great fool, that fool.

The Kiss of the Wind

LORD of wide spaces
And the great, grey sea,
Make of this wild, wet wind
A kiss for me ;
And let child angel faces,
Winging from airy places,
Blow blessings down on me.

Lord, I am tired of towns
And people's complicated ways ;
The gay wind sweeps the downs,
With gay birds plays,
Tossing them high above the tossing sea ;
Make of Thy wild wet wind
Thy kiss for me.

Love Rides Pillion

LOVE rides pillion all the way,
Over the heath and over the heather;
"Come," cries Love, "and speed away,
Though rough the road and long the way;
For we are bold and blithe and gay
Since we shall ride together."

Love rides pillion all the way,
Over the heath and over the heather;
Though hills are steep and skies are grey
Full fair the night and dear the day,
For Love, as I have heard men say,
Cares nothing for the weather.

We'll ride together, you and I,
We'll bide together, you and I;
For Love is enough,
Be the road smooth or rough,
When we ride side by side,
You and I—you and I.

The King's Highway

O WHITE and wide is the King's highway,
And who would ride alone
When he might have kindly company
As he rides to London Town?
"Not I," said Jock to Molly Brown,
"We'll ride together to London Town."

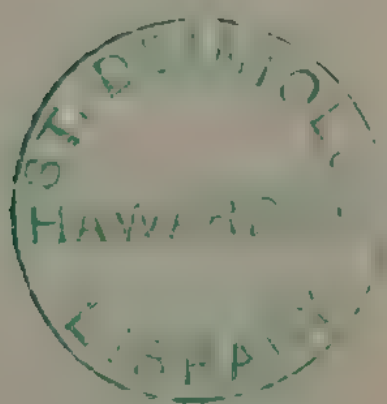
Our life is but a winding way,
And who would ride alone
If a friendly arm might be one's stay?
For two are better than one.
Not I, not I—methinks I hear
My heart's true comrade drawing near!

Sea Sunset

A FLOWER of flame, a living rose,
The sun sinks into the sea;
And the waves' soft swirl,
All rose and pearl,
Murmurs caressingly;
And low and long, like a siren's song,
Comes the sad, sweet sob of the sea.

Ah, who could dream that the water's gleam
Were the pall of a million dead?
Through caverns dim
Pale fishes swim,
While, softly carpeted,
The deep floor holds, in seaweed folds,
White body and weed-wound head.

I wait for the tide, that will not wait,
To bear me out to sea.
On death's ebb-tide
My bark must ride
To find eternity—
And on that strand the Christ shall stand,
Who walked upon the sea.



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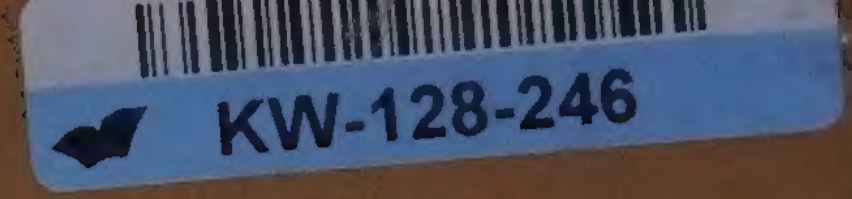
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